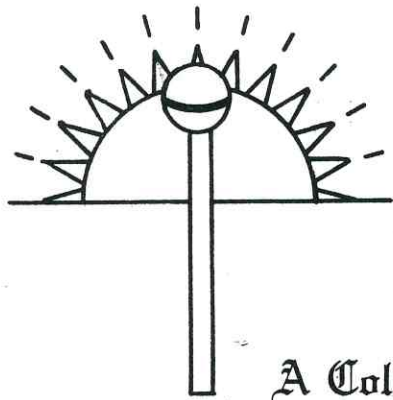


Morning Star



volume 1
north scott senior high school
eldridge

1983-84
iowa



Morning Star

A Collection of Student Writing

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A Letter From The Editors

This letter's purpose is to explain the derivation of the title for our student writing anthology.

First of all, the morning star was a medieval weapon, somewhat like a mace in appearance. That factor was considered as it would complement North Scott's other publications: The Lance, our newspaper; and The Shield, our yearbook. In the context of medieval weapons, morning star is quite appropriate.

Second, the term "morning star" can be used to describe any person whose talents are beginning to emerge. For a publication devoted to rising young writers, "Morning Star" reflects on both the publication and the writers represented within its covers.

Finally, the title's double meaning shows a quality unique to the English language. In no other language is it possible to form a double meaning using the exact words in the same context. Only the English tongue is so versatile. Therefore, the title "Morning Star" not only represents its literal meanings, but also indicates what can be done with the English language by those individuals, some of whom are represented in this anthology, who have made writing their craft.

Read and enjoy,

The Editorial Staff

A WANDER IN THE WOODS

The cabin door bangs shut behind me as the cold air of the night crawls up my red wool jacket. Only half of the orangish-red sun can be seen, giving me about an hour to wander the woods. Crawling over the old rusty barbed wire fence, pushed down from many adventurers, I enter the peaceful land of earth. The crunch of the fallen leaves on the half frozen ground is the only sound heard except for the occasional hoot of an owl just waking from its slumber. Silver reflections dance on the shimmering river, drawing me closer to watch the images. Around me there is a feeling of peace, sad and lonely, but sweet, and it caresses and calms me, helping me to better understand the meaning of life. A soft night breeze creeps up my jacket, sending shivering prickles down my spine.

I avert my eyes to the huge cliffs that hang menacingly above me, taunting me to climb them. As I walk toward these huge rocks, damp rotten logs make mushy crackles beneath my feet. I begin to trudge up the steep hill below the cliff, fighting my way through sharp briars and bushes. Slipping on the dark wet leaves for the third time, my levi's wet and muddy, I curse to myself and view how far there is left to go. My warm breath, which comes more quickly now, creates a mist in front of my face. Finally, I come to the place where I must climb. Reaching to put my hand on the cold, sandy cliff rock, I pull myself up to a ledge. From hand to foot, I work myself up the stone wall. A small hidden crevice captures my muddy tennis shoe in its grasp. Panicking, I tug my foot hard, trying to free myself. When I'm released, the stones tumble down the side of the cliff, creating a small dusty avalanche. After many struggles, I finally reach my goal. I have conquered this cliff.

Looking out, the view is breathtaking, and it overwhelms me. The sunset is warm and low, the sun finally resting; and it creates a soft glow that makes the land even more awesome. The river snakes along in a stream of silver, then disappears from my sight. Naked trees spread their crooked but yet so elegant branches, providing homes for many inhabitants.

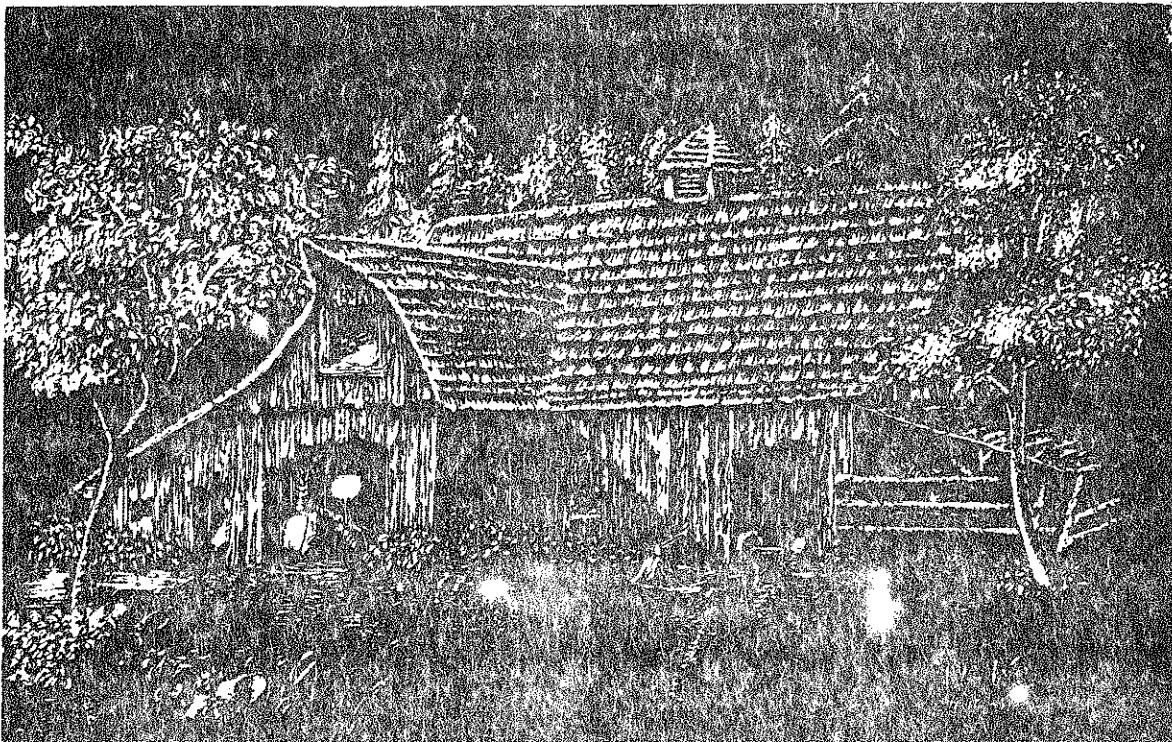
Suddenly, a dull thud sounds in the air, shattering the silence around me. Arousing my curiosity, I walk toward this noise, looking for its source. The soft green moss cushions my feet as they pat onward. I smell something in the crisp air which I can't recognize. Taking another whiff, the warm rich aroma smells of smoked sausage. That's it! It's smoke coming from a chimney up ahead. As I follow the smoke, the chimney, and the undistinguishable thud, I realize someone must be living in this part of the woods. I must have meandered farther than usual on this day. Coming into the clearing surrounded by forest pines, a small log cabin made of rugged timber appears. The soft gray smoke from the brick chimney streaks across the darkening sky. A young boy, about twelve years old, is swinging an ax above his head, chopping some wood. His body is strong and lean, promising much growth when he finally reaches manhood. Wearing a red plaid flannel shirt, worn at the elbows, the boy's pink cheeks flush from the hard work and the cold air. He pauses to rest a moment, looking at the earth around him, then remembers his job and begins to chop the firewood again. As I watch him work, time passes by without me knowing it. The cabin door opens, a woman

A WANDER IN THE WOODS (continued)

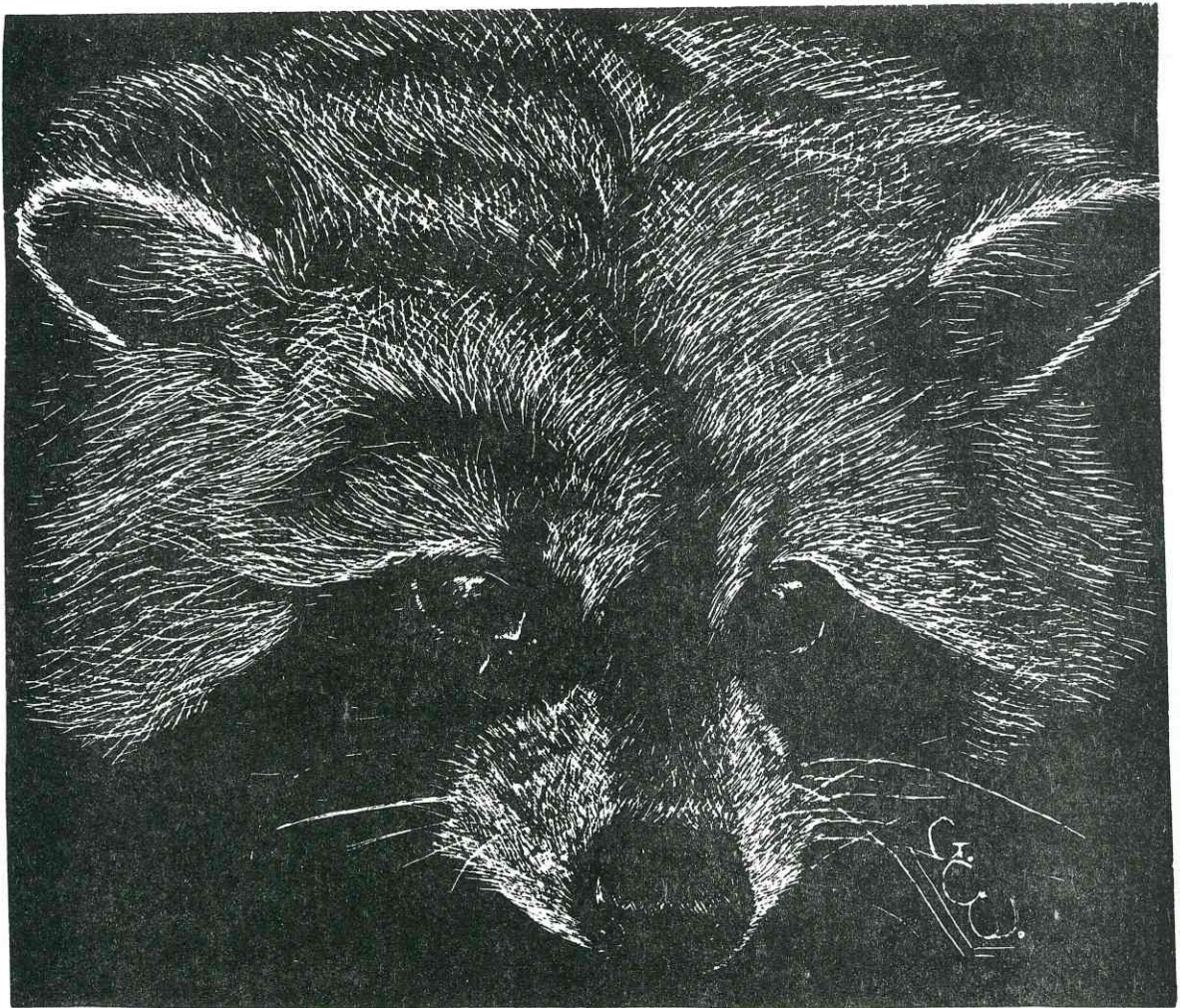
leans out, and she yells to the boy, "Jeremiah! It's supper time! You can finish your work in the morning."

This reminds me that I must get home, and I realize that my stomach is growling. I can taste the hot soup with juicy chunks of beef and colorful vegetables floating around on top, waiting for me at home. I begin to run while the warm earth colors flash by me, creating beautiful abstract pictures in my mind. Down the cliffs I go, causing more crumbly rocks to fall. It is almost dark now, except for the reflection of the bright full moon on the water. Crawling over the barbed wire fence, I can see the lights in our cabin. Walking up the creaky steps, I open the pine door, and the smell of steaming hot chocolate dotted with whipped cream reaches my nose. I kick off my muddy tennis shoes and try to pull off the sharp prickly burrs that always seem to stick so tightly to my wool jacket. I hang the jacket up on my hook, and wander into the tiny kitchen where my mom is setting the table for supper. My cheeks are still flushed from the icy night air and the heat coming from the stove feels hot on them. Mom slides a mug of frothy hot chocolate in front of me. It's just what I need to complete a perfectly refreshing wander in the woods.

Robin Cline, '87



Tami Peterson, '84



Greg Whitesides, '85

WIZARD'S WORLD

The winter wind is icy cold this night, and six feet of snow lies on the ground with more falling by the hour. Frostbite sets in quickly if you're not protected properly.

A rap on the door brings a hefty little man who kindly admits you. The dimly lit hall leads past several doors to a stairway. Briskly the man leads you to the last door before the stairs; he enters. Inside, you see it is a small coat room with a few belongings.

After removing your winter outer garments, up the stairs the man leads. A light frost covers the exterior walls, but the air is warm. The walls are adorned with tapestries and niches with various rare art forms. Warmth from the stairs greets you nicely.

A heavy oak door bars passage to the room beyond. The dwarf beckons you to follow as he enters the room. A more intense light halts you as you accustom your eyes.

Inside, the warmth is pleasant. A mug of hot ale heats your hands. The soft chair and blanket pads and warms you. The smell of hot food and ale is sensational among the other puissant scents permeate the air. Sulphur burns the nose. Wood smoke adds to the collage.

A fire snaps, crackles and sizzles nearby. Sounds of other workings create a small chaos. Some of these can be identified over the din; such as rapidly boiling or slow cooking pastes. A small bat flutters its wings and rattles its cage. Three baby dragons communicate loudly with each other.

A fine meal of mulled ale and salty ham is superb. Hot, buttery bread, fresh and dried fruits and bits of chocolate comprise the rest of the meal. Apples, oranges and another odd fruit make the cake-like dessert.

Dull and vivid colors complement each other nicely. On the wall are thousands of books. Most of these are covered with dust, but close examination reveals the covers are vividly colored. Some of these toms lie about the room open to an article of information or experimentation.

Test tubes, jars, and beakers are scattered about the room. A few are empty. But the majority contain something even if it's the last remains of its contents. Some of the jars are marked with their contents' name. Among those marked, a few names are legible. Such as candied snake eyes, pickled dragon livers, or hard boiled platypus eggs.

Many instruments line the tables and shelves. At least a dozen thermometers are in use! Several scales and balances with precise weights and measurements are set around the room. Graduated cylinders, measuring spoons and much more are here for very accurate measurements.

The wizard, your host, wanders about the room adjusting, adding, and calculating. This mage is dressed in flowing green robes with bright orange symbols and signs. He wears no other visible accouterments save a staff he carries. Explored and old is this staff with several gems on it. His hair is a shiny silver white. Tanned and wrinkled is most of his skin save the bald pate atop his head. Saturated with wisdom and knowledge are his deep blue eyes. Thin lips allow dry cracked words to pass between them. He hobbles about on one good leg leaning heavily against the staff. It can be seen in him the lines and wrinkles of many years.

(continued)

An aura of mystery surrounds him as he stoops to a book. He must brush aside his beard to read the page. With sudden vitality he stands erect, dropping his staff. Words of an unknown tongue flow from his mouth. Small gestures and signals he makes with his hands. On a sudden the room fills with an odd air and seems full of power. A light flashes and a pot begins to glow, but the power fades. A full, happy smile creases the aged face.

After speaking with him, you bid him a long goodbye. Although the air is cold as you leave, warmth glows in your heart.

Brian Kay, '87



Dawn Oswald, '86

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

The sun glowed brilliantly in the clear blue sky as my mother and I hopped into the car for a quick trip to town. Though only three and a half, I enjoyed traveling to Davenport with my mom. Anything was better than being cooped up at home playing with "Baby Tender Love" or "Mrs. Beasley" all day. Mom cherished my company since her older two children both attended school. I felt like the youngest pup in a litter which nobody wanted, but the baby the mommy refused to part with.

As we entered Younkers shoe department, Mom began talking to the sales clerk. Bored with their conversation about "penny loafers," I wandered off on my own. My eyes were amazed with the variety of interesting objects I tumbled upon. First I noticed several ladies sustained in numerous strange positions, stiff as a starched shirt, staring curiously in the distance like "Barbies" at a tea party. All of them wore little white tags which dangled down from the sleeves of their costumes. I think it symbolized some type of gang or club they belonged to. A few of these attached to long, gold metal bars showing superiority to her fellow club members. After studying them for around ten minutes, I decided to continue my journey.

A colossal, extravagant counter with a horde of women piled about it like bees attracted to honey aroused my curiosity next. As I drew closer to the hive, my nose tingled by scents of wild flowers and diapers which the ladies anxiously sprayed abundant amounts of over their bodies. On the opposite side of the nest, hands flew from tray to tray filled with assorted colors and textures of crayons and finger paints. This confused me, for the women were painting their faces instead of coloring books. At about this time I left to look for my lost mother.

In the distance I saw a familiar figure resembling mommy. My short legs began moving swiftly down the aisle towards the delicate object. The closer I came, the more excited I began to feel, because I knew I'd be safe with my mother. With only a few feet to go, I exploded full speed and exuberantly grabbed her hand. At that very instant it became dislodged from her body. My God, I broke my mommy! Anger, but yet despair flowed from head to toe, leaving my heart shattered in thousands of pieces. As tears trickled down one cheek, I heard cries of laughter in the background. I turned around to see what evil people found humor in my disassembled mom. My eyes fell out of their sockets at the sight of my mother chuckling with the clerk at the obvious mistake I made. Appaled, but relieved by the appearance of my mother, a streak of humiliation swept through my body. My mother rescued me humanely, treating me to carmel corn and soda pop from the breathtaking experience. In a short time the turmoil was indefinitely forgotten.

Beth Tank, '84

SO SILENT STAND THE TREES

Willow wisps whispering in the
wind, tell the tale two times two lovely
little children.

Who laughed and played by the
singing spring, so many years ago.

Their shrieks of joy, their shouts of
laughter echo still in the boughs of the
silent watchers round the water.

They ran and jumped, giggled and sang in
the quietness of the woods.

They came by day, and they came by night, to
tumble round in the glade of green.

But now the oaks stand still and tall.
Quietness abounds around all.

No more do the four come to frolic in
the grass.

They've grown and gone, forgotten that
glade where they ran and played. So many years
ago.

So silent and old grows the woods.

The spring that once sang a merry melody, now
gurgles quietly pass the aging trees.

The youthful joy of the young children in
their private vale, has faded now to cherished
memories.

So silent stand the trees.

Until more childish feet lead their owners there.

So Silent Stand the Trees.....

Lisa Moeller, '85

Joe, my husband of eight months, and I finally locked our store and dragged ourselves home to 2604 W. 44th Street. The clock was striking 11:00 P.M. as we walked into our living room. Our bodies ached from working all day.

Our store was one of those huge, old, general appliance stores that furnished the small town of Cedarville with everything from toys to refrigerators, cat litter to groceries, ice skates to tennis shoes. On Christmas Eve, Joe and I sold almost all of our toys, and all of the layaways, except one package which hadn't been picked up.

Usually Joe and I kept the store open until absolutely everything had been picked up. We knew that we wouldn't be very happy on Christmas morning knowing that some little child's gift was sitting on the shelf. But the person who had put a dollar down on the package never appeared.

The next morning, Joe woke up feeling miserable. His nose was stuffed and his body ached, one of those 24 hour flus. But I still dragged him out of bed so we could open our gifts from each other. After all, this was our first Christmas together since we were married. This beautiful, cold day was special.

So Joe pulled himself out of bed, complaining every step of the way. I had bought him new skis and a watch, and Joe bought me this gorgeous outfit to wear on New Year's Day. After we had finished opening our gifts, I allowed Joe to go back to sleep, knowing that if I didn't he would be sick for New Year's Eve too.

So there I was alone, doing dishes and feeling kind of let down. The weather outside was drizzling sleet mixed with snow and the temperature had dropped to only 5 degrees. I thought to myself how grateful I was for the warmth of our apartment and that I didn't have to be outside on this icy, bone-chilling day.

And then it began. Something I'd never experienced before. A strange, persistent urge. "Go to the store," it seemed to say.

I looked out at the icy sidewalks and said to myself, "That's crazy!"

For an hour I fought this persisting urge, and finally gave in.

Joe was asleep when I looked in on him, so I didn't bother waking his tired and sick body just to tell him about my persistent feeling. I left a note on the table in case he woke and found me gone.

I put my gray, wool coat and matching tam on then proceeded with my gloves, scarf, and galoshes. Once outside, none of these garments seemed to help. The wind cut right through me and the sleet stung my face. The ten minute walk seemed like an eternity.

As I rounded the corner to the store, I noticed two huddled figures in front of the store. I wondered who in the world would be at the store on Christmas Day. I soon realized that the figures were two children, one boy about nine, and a girl about six.

The older one, dark-haired and fair-skinned, shouted, "Here she comes."

The younger child, tiny and blonde-haired, looked up at me with big, brown eyes wet with tears.

"What are you children doing out here in this freezing cold?" I scolded, hurrying them into the store and turning up the heat. "You should be at home on a day like this."

The children were poorly dressed. They wore no hats or gloves, and their shoes barely held together. I rubbed their small hands as they told me why they were here.

(continued)

"We've been waiting for you," replied the older.

For an hour and a half they waited for me to arrive at the store.

"Why were you waiting for me?" I asked, astonished.

"Because my little sister didn't get any Christmas."

The boy touched my shoulder. "We want to buy some skates. We have these three dollars. See Miss Lady," he said, pulling the wadded bills from his pockets.

"Oh, I'm so sorry, but we have nothing left....Wait!" I exclaimed as I remembered the layaway gift left on the shelf. "Is it skates?" I wondered, and in the back of my mind I knew it was skates. But then I remembered the size. It was highly doubtful they could be the girl's size. I slipped them onto her feet. A perfect fit!

Jimmy, the boy, helped his sister, Sarah, stand and presented the three dollars to me.

"No, I'm not taking your money. You go buy some gloves for you and your sister."

The two angels looked up at me and two grins stretched wide when they realized they were getting skates and the money.

After the children had warmed up, I turned the furnace down, and we walked to the door. As I was locking the door, I asked Jimmy how lucky it was that I had decided to come to the store.

"How did you know I'd come?"

His reply shocked me. Jimmy gazed at me steadily and softly said, "I asked Jesus to send you."

"God planned this," I thought to myself as we waved goodbye.

I turned home to a brighter Christmas than I had left. But the one thing that really made Christmas wonderful was that Jesus was there.

Melissa McDonald, '84

WOODBURNING STOVES

Today, in America, the majority of homes are equipped with central heating systems. Modern man has only to turn up the thermostat for warmth. Most individuals possess little knowledge of earlier heating methods such as the woodburning stove. With my father being a modern Charles Ingalls, I happen to be blessed with an education about stoves.

No household should be without one of these little hot boxes. Along with an abundance of heat, they provide homedwellers everywhere with many entertaining chores. Life would be banal and colorless without the opportunity to look after "the stove." Tending a stove is closer to the American way than simply turning up a thermostat.

Nothing compares to waking up each morning and shoveling ashes out of the stove. The sweet smelling scent of smoke clings to one's face, hair, and garments. A perfect start to a new day. Everybody loves smelling like a smokestack throughout the day.

After the vigorous chore of cleaning the stove, a glance around the room may inform the cleaner that wood must be fetched to start a new fire. Venturing into the twenty below weather brings greater joy than the shoveling of ashes. The frigid air puts blush in your cheeks and cracks in your lips as one chips off chunks of wood from the frozen pile.

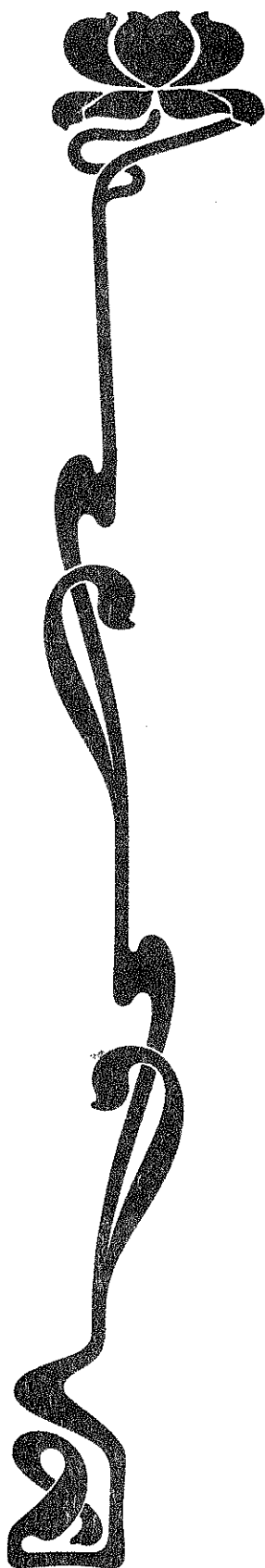
With a fresh supply of wood, a new fire may be started. Sometimes, instead of a fire, the living room becomes a smoking chamber layered with becoming black soot. This soot makes Saturday mornings come alive. What could be a better way to pass this time than dusting and washing walls?

When the fire does start, however, you fall instantly in love with the little stove as it thaws your freezing frame. Of course a number of people would rather stick to their thermostat than be adventurous with a stove. I disagree heartily with them. Nothing seems more satisfying than the pioneer way of gathering around the stove to pass the long winter days, eagerly anticipating the coming of spring and the wood-chopping season.

Susan Lake, '84



Todd Jones, '84



MAN?

What is a man? Oh!
the possibilities!

But he is such a
fleeting thing.

Not comparing with
eternity.

He is a prisoner of
time and space.

Of destinies without
a face.

He is a puff of smoke,
an image in a mirror.

A willow-the-whisp
being.

Lasting only for a
flash in time's unending
corridors.

And when he is gone,
what is left?

A fading memory?

A paragraph in history?

A dim face in a photo
album?

A name written on a yellowing
page?

Someone remembered
by only a loving few.

But, what is a
man?

Why is a man, what
a man is?

What?

Why?

How?

Echo down the halls
of time, uncountable by
a mere image, a flicker
in space.

A ripple in eternity's
dark pool.

A fleeting, forgettable
thing.

A tumble weed
blowing by, in the
desertedness of the universe.

MAN? ! ?

Lisa Moeller, '85



Royce Bare, '87



Tina Belk, '84

"Look, Margaret, a rainbow!"

"It's beautiful," she said hurriedly. "Can we go now?"

"No, just a little while longer."

The two girls, Margaret and Elizabeth, were sitting on the grassy bank of a still pond. It was a very warm day and still a little damp from the shower earlier that day.

"The ground is still wet," stated Margaret as she jumped to her feet. "Mama will skin you if you get your new dress dirty. You better get off the ground."

"Do you like my new dress?" asked Elizabeth, still lying on the grass.

"It's a nice dress, but I don't like the color. Why did you get a purple dress?"

"I love the color! I wish everything was purple!" exclaimed Elizabeth.

"Everything? That's stupid," said Margaret.

"The rainbow has purple in it," said Elizabeth.

"Yes, but it's not real."

"What do you mean, not real?"

"It's what they call an illusion. I learned that in school."

"I'm never going to school."

"Oh yes you are. Besides, only six year old babies think a rainbow is real."

"I'm not a baby and I know it's real!" exclaimed Elizabeth.

"I really don't care what you think. I'm not going to wait for you anymore."

Elizabeth turned to see Margaret disappear down the path. Then she looked back toward the rainbow.

She climbed up the brilliant colors. They were so bright she could hardly see.

"I knew it was real. If only Margaret could see me now."

The colors made a nice ladder for Elizabeth.

When she reached the top she went straight for the purple. There she found a window with purple curtains. She parted the curtains and opened the window. As she opened it, a cold breeze blew through her.

When she stuck her head through, she couldn't believe what she saw.

"A completely purple world!" she exclaimed.

Everything was a shade of purple. Light and dark purples covered the entire world.

This part of the world was extremely cold, almost all frozen.

The substitute ground was a lavender ice, which was a few shades lighter than the purple igloos.

Even the sky was purple, a little darker than the icy floor, but not as dark as the igloos.

The animals were also purple. There were purple polar bears, seals, walruses, and whales. Each was a different shade of purple, from violet to indigo.

The cold was too much for Elizabeth so she shut the window to her purple world and drew the purple curtains.

She was about to climb to the next color when she lost her grip and felt herself sliding down. She fell so fast that her stomach seemed to stay at the top and no scream came because the air had been taken from her lungs.

(continued)

"Elizabeth Marie, you had better get home fast. Mama's been looking for you for over an hour. Get up!"

It was Margaret.

Elizabeth got up and looked in the direction of the rainbow. It was gone.

"Where's the rainbow?" asked Elizabeth.

"I told you it was never here."

Elizabeth followed Margaret down the path. She never really noticed how many colors there were before.

"Margaret, I don't think I want a purple world after all."

E. Arvidson, '86



Karen Carstenson, '87

(continued)

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E. Arvidson, '86



Karen Carstenson, '87

The desert was hot. When the boy on the motorcycle pulled up to Ed Johnson's gas station at 5 o'clock, the temperature was 97 degrees and the sun was a large white dot on a clear blue background. The stranger put his kickstand down, turned off the motor, and walked up to Ed.

"You got gas here, old man?" he asked with a newly lit cigarette hanging from his mouth.

"Yeah, fill it up yourself," as he forced himself not to add anything more. He was a venomous old man. The youth filled his tank.

"Didn't there used to be a town around here?" he asked as he looked at the barren landscape.

"Yeah, but about twenty years ago, fire destroyed everything. Still don't know who did it."

The boy smiled at the old man. "Why don't you tell me about it you old, wrinkled carcass. I bet you know alot about it," he said in cool, even tones.

Ed was furious. He stammered out, "Y-y-you get the h-h-hell out of here, you young p-p-punk, before I skin your hide!"

The heat was unbearable.

The youth smiled again. "I'd like to see you make me, you ornery old cuss. You're so wrinkled, I bet you couldn't even get out of that chair. You're almost dead anyway."

Ed was turning red. He hated kids, and this pup was giving him a hard time, something he didn't need. He slowly took a knife out of his pocket and smiled. "We'll see who'll boss who around now, you little...."

He didn't even hear his own body hit the ground.

The youth stood there, smiling, with a smoking gun in his hand. He looked at the gun, still smiling, put it in his mouth, and fired.

It was still 97 degrees outside.

Doug Collins, '84

"MR. SHAKE-N-BAKE"

This young player has a wild nickname,
And this was a very, very important game.
The NCAA Championship was at stake,
For the underdog team and "Mr. Shake-n-Bake."

He went up for a jam which he should do with ease,
But he was a little short, a case of white man's disease.
What would he do next, the crowd began to wonder.
Could this be the revenge of the great "Chocolate Thunder?"

The fans roared as he tore down the hoop.
An awesome, a powerful, 360 alley-oop.
They thought that last slam was really cool,
Because their favorite, Mr. Shake-n-Bake was "goin' to school."

A cram, a toosh, an assist and a fake,
This was the day of "Mr. Shake-n-Bake."
He ended the day with a Phi-Slam-Jam,
A terrorizing, roof-rising, great gorilla slam.

Sam Lynn, '87

BUT WHY?

But why?
Why does he go when I think I love him?
When I think I care.
Why does he leave me at this time of trouble?
This time of despair.
Why don't things work out?
I love him so much.
Why can't he be here now?
I already miss his touch.
Why are all our plans gone?
Our beautiful plans.
Why is he gone?
My most loving man.
Why has my rainbow come to an end?
Without a pot of gold
Why has my spring turned to winter?
My warmth turned to cold.
Why do I have to be living?
I think I might die.
Why can't he be here now?
So I don't have to cry?

Andrea McBride, '85

UNICORN

I wish I were a
Unicorn
I wish I had a
twirly horn.

I would be one of a kind.
I would be hard to find.

Everyone would want to see me.
But when they would near, I would flee.

They would run right behind,
Trying to catch that one-of-a-kind.

But I would be too fast.
Their sights of me wouldn't last.

Then I would be gone.
And I would go on.

How I wish I were a
Unicorn.

Jana Lee, '87



RUNNING

Why run?
To tire yourself, to sweat,
to punish your body.

Or to gain a fulfilling
discipline of the body
and brain, emotions all let loose!

That exhilarating stimulating speed!
I'm free. Meet your goals.
Strive for a win in competition.

Running alive!!

Tara Temperly, '87

I don't know what to do, my life has changed so much.
I need a friend to talk to, and another one to touch.
I need a person to love me, a person I can love back.
I need a special friend, that's what I now lack.
I need a place called home, that's where my heart lies.
I need a place for my heart and soul to abide.
I need to find a way to release my pain.
I need to find a person for whom to blame.
I need to find a way to help them understand.
I need to find a way to tell them I'm doing the best I can.
I need to find a star that can give me all my dreams.
I need to find a moon that can shine on me its beams.
I need to find a light to show me the true way.
And.....
I need to find a plan to get me through today.

Andrea McBride



WHAT IS LOVE?

Love can be a relationship between a girl and a boy.
Love can be a friendship always filled with joy.
Love can be the connection between you and the Lord.
Love can be the likeness for all the points you scored.
Love can be a fall day raking all the leaves.
Love can be a spring day cleaning out the eaves.
Love can be the winter and the summer too.

Tell me what love is, cause I think I love you.

Andrea McBride, '85

THE CONSPIRATOR

Hoffler crouched down in his seat on the 317 terminal shiftcar. He glanced through the tinted windows, a warm spring day existed on the other side. It was April 24, 2185....a long awaited day for Hoffler.

This was it. Today was the day he'd practiced two and a half years for....he couldn't screw up. The same question pegged his mind...."I wonder, is it still there?"

He held his entrance ticket firmly, hoping everything would go as planned.

Every year following an election, the president of the United States makes progressive speeches in America's three largest cities. New York's Mandel Auditorium is the site of today's speech. Hidden behind the back panel of seat 21, row 6, is a seven-inch scope gun. Two bullets wait in its cartridge. Hoffler placed this weapon here two and a half years ago, when he worked for A. G. Mandel.

His entrance ticket seats Hoffler in seat 21, row 7, directly behind his gun.

The terminal shiftcar came to a halt in front of the auditorium. The building was packed with people. Hoffler hadn't expected so many witnesses.

Hoffler was a young man of great wealth. Power was non-existent in his lonesome role. He remembered when, as a child, he studied how wealth meant power in almost all societies. He sometimes wishes to live in the distant past.

As he was seated, Hoffler noticed the back panel....four small screws fastened it to the chair. This did not matter, for Hoffler installed these screws himself after concealing the gun. One swift yank and the panel would be removed.

Two hours passed by. The president, a tall gray haired man, stood twenty feet away from Hoffler.

Hoffler didn't listen to the speech. He reviewed his plan.... when the speech is over, everyone will stand up. The panel will be ripped away with lightning speed, and the gun will be fired. The target....the president's head. (The heart is too small). For two and a half years, Hoffler practiced his dream. He knew the exact range of his target. He could perform this deed in a split second.

Recent nightmares haunted his mind once again.... What if the gun is not there?....What if I fire, only to find out the bullets have been removed? These thoughts passed through his mind, causing his heart to tremble as the speech came to a close.

The president spoke his last words..."And so my fellow Americans, the time has come to make this country of ours a greater nation of the modern world. Thank you."

The applause covered the room. People in the front row slowly rose to their feet. The wave of the ovation was now spread to the sixth row....and the seventh.

Hoffler tore off the back panel. The gun was still there. Without hesitation, he took aim, and fired. The destination of the alacritous bullet was complete....the president's forehead. The victim fell back in a bloody explosion. His dream was fulfilled.

THE CONSPIRATOR (continued)

Secret servicemen crowded the body upon the stage. Guards siezed Hoffler. His hands were rapidly cuffed behind his back. The auditorium was flooded with chaos.

At that time, a serviceman stepped away from the body, and approached the podium. He took a handkerchief from his breast pocket to wipe the thick blood from the microphone.... "Ladies and gentlemen." The crowd didn't respond. The serviceman drew his gun from its holster and fired two shots into the ceiling. This brought silence as all eyes moved to the stage. The serviceman continued.... "The president of the United States.... is dead."

The guards stepped away from Hoffler. He was released from the handcuffs. An enormous amount of power had been gained in the past five minutes. A leader died, a leader was born. Hoffler smiled deeply.

A wave of reporters now crowded the proud assassin. Cameras and microphones flashed into his face as he walked toward the stage. Hoffler answered no questions. His eyes were centered on the American flag that hung above the stage. This was his country now.

Kevin Kluever, '84



Kim Schneckloth, '85

(continued)

Now, I think I'll get Mary something at Sears so she can exchange it later. And Bill? What would he think if..... I hope I at least get a card from Uncle Fred this year, God knows I deserve it - I've been sending him something for years!

Will Rudolph die? Will Christmas become a Christmas special or tinsel? Will we forget the real meaning of Christmas? Jesus? Mary? The blessed star to show the way?

Not as long as one straggler remembers.

Dave DeBoer, '85

LAST LAP

The time has come for me to say goodbye
To familiar places and things.
This sadness couldn't equal the crying
That they had to bring.

But goodbye is familiar to me
In a certain, saddening way.
And so for my few friends, my swan song
Is something that must be played.

Tomorrow I shall exist no longer,
It is time for me to pass.
Life was never one of the scattered things
I was able to grasp.

Hate has been a good friend to me
Along with pain and tears,
So tune me out and I'll slip away.
I wanted to make this clear.

Susan Meyer, '84

A light snow fell gently in the mountains, the horizon lost in the blinding whiteness, as six men labored across virgin snow toward lofty peaks always out of their grasps: six insignificant figures in an albino world. Their breath, steamed in tempo with their driving legs, a cadenza by some half-mad, half-inspired, eccentric composer in a rhapsody of white. A seventh, smaller figure straggled clumsily after them, working hard to keep up, but sliding a yard back for every two skied. Nonetheless, he was in harmony with the land and the land with him.

This was when computers were still unwieldy conglomerates of tubes and metal only known in laboratories and colleges; when calculators were a luxury for the rich, and still could only work the four basic functions; before A.T.C.'s and Pac Man; when fun was using your body to swim, climb trees, and play football and war. This was before we all grew up and before my brothers and sisters left home to forge the new paths of life and adulthood. This was when we shared the same house and the same table.

I was the straggler, a small boy with red cheeks and a red nose, always trailing but always belonging, not a passive observer watching through invisible walls yearning to belong. And this was one of the happiest, blessed times of the year - even better, in its own, holy way, than the golden oasis of summer that stretches out after the last day of school. This was Christmas time. A time of magic and Santa Claus, of love and baby Jesus, of trimming the tree and midnight Mass, and of presents and family.

Family then was neighbors and close friends, along with brothers, sisters, and parents; the people whom we played with, confided in, and even fought with, but with whom we shared Christmas and frigid, wintry white nights.

Christmas meant an expedition to forge Christmas trees with the Nashes, which was an all day outing. The "Menfolk" - Dad, Tom, and Greg, Mr. Nash, Todd, and Troy, and I - would strap on cross-country skis and set out, armed with saws, to track down the perfect Christmas tree among the thousands - millions - in the sweet-smelling, nettle-carpeted, Colorado pine forests. The "Womenfolk" - Mom, Peg, and Ann, Mrs. Nash and Wendy - would stay back at the cars, tending the fire, warming cocoa, and gossiping pleasantly.

Long we skied, searching, inspecting every prospective fir. Then as dusk first etched the sky with its ethereal fingers and the rocks melted into forbidding alcazars, as I, a pathetic figure in green on tawdry blue skis, began to scurry faster in order to hug the group to keep safe from the shadow creatures and the forest corsairs that lurked in the forest depths and preyed on small stragglers like me, they would stand in a clearing, the perfect trees, wreathed in snow and shadow, patiently waiting for anxious, loving hands to gently bring them home to rest before a warm fire and to be decorated in silver and gold, green and red, popcorn and sentimental favorites.

Now what is getting a Christmas tree? True, it still lights a child's heart, but it is a trip to the Optimists' Club, or Randalls, the Y's men or the Lions' Club. An hour excursion for a pre-cut tree that is helpless and bound with cheap twine and bailing wire, or unpacking a plastic one from a musty box where it had been hastily flung to make way for New Year's and Auld Lang Syne, or a hurried errand for the mere sake of getting a tree because - well, because it's just not Christmas without a tree or presents, is it? And besides, what would the neighbors think if I didn't at least get a tree?



Ho Tran, '84



Todd Jones, '84

YES, I LOVE YOU

Yes, I love you even though
You may not know,
My deepest fears inside,
Or of the tears I have cried.

Yes, I love you even when
We disagree time and time again
About the silly little things.
We never think of the hurt it brings.

Yes, I love you deep in my soul
For you are me, and we are whole.
Because of all you mean to me,
Let our love grow, it is meant to be.

Yes, I love you and I know
If our love is not true, it will not grow.
And if we part you will always be
Someone special and a part of me.

Amy Klemme, '87

"A SLAMDUNK"

He flies through the air, with the greatest of ease,
He's not a big man, he's only five three.
He makes the good steal, and breaks for the hoop,
As his teammate gives him a great alley-oop.
When he reaches his peak, the crowd starts to roar,
As the whole glass backboard shatters to the floor.

David Martel, '87

A TRIBUTE TO ESTHER MAE MAE

Pass the ketchup and a dash of salt.
You're the one, it's all your fault.
Cookies please, crumbs work fine.
Mom won't be home for quite some time.

Crackers, chocolate, ice cream, too,
Anything works, it's up to you.
Stay in the kitchen, don't run away.
It's no fun unless we all play!
Your hair is white, must be the flour.

Don't look now, it's time for a shower!
A cold wetness falls upon you like rain.
You feel like a wet noodle sliding down
the drain.
Reach deep inside you, reach for a Sprite!
Look out now you're ready to fight!

Grab the pepper, chips, and sugar
Pick your nose and add a bugar.
Pickles, pizza.....a noise I hear?
Oh, me, Oh, my, it's mother dear!

Grab a mop, a sponge, a broom.
Hurry, hurry, clean this room!
We turned around to see the disaster -
Looked at each other and broke out in
laughter.

Mom appeared at the door, her face turned
white.
What happened here? A tornado strike?
From this mess there is a moral:
Have a food fight to settle a quarrel!

Jamie Hansen, '87

THE LITTLEST FAIRY

Have you ever been in the land of fairies, where no one is taller than three inches? Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be very small? This is the story of the littlest fairy. She is only one and one-half inches tall and is called Tabitha, meaning gazelle. She wears a short pink dress while her tiny wings have a silvery sheen. She is always surrounded by an aura of light that stems from her bright cheerfulness.

The littlest fairy was not always as happy as she is now. There was once a time when she felt that no one would ever let her do anything, just because she was so small. Because of her size, Tabitha was constantly getting in the way of the older and bigger fairies. She was always being told that she wasn't big enough or old enough to help the others. Sad and disheartened she set out to prove how wrong everyone was about her.

Now everyone knows that all fairies like to help people, and Tabitha was no exception to this rule. She went out into the forest to think of a way to help people that no one had ever thought of before. Finally, she had an idea. She would give money to all boys and girls who were good in return for their baby teeth. She thought it would give children a good reason to be good, which it did.

When Tabitha told the other fairies what she intended to do, they just laughed and told her that she was just being silly. To prove how wrong the others were, she set out in the middle of the night to begin her deed.

She continued to work each night visiting only those whose children were good. Each morning all the children who were good would find a small coin where their tooth had been. Even the children's parents were mystified at where the money could have come from.

The other fairies were puzzled as to why children were suddenly being good. When questioned, the littlest fairy replied that it was the "Tooth Fairy." The others just laughed. "That's silly," they replied. "Who ever heard of a tooth fairy?" "I have!" she exclaimed and ran off crying.

The fairies didn't know what to make of what Tabitha had said. They decided to follow her that night and see what she did. That night after Tabitha had sneaked out, the others crept slowly after her, taking care not to make any noise lest she should hear them. They all watched in silence as the littlest fairy went about her work. Well there really was a "Tooth Fairy" and who could have thought that tiny little Tabitha would be it.

The next morning all the fairies crept quietly into Tabitha's room to give her their apologies for not believing that she was capable of doing such hard work. She, of course, accepted their apology and continued her job as "Tooth Fairy" in order to show others that they too can be good and kind.

Moral: Even the smallest of God's creatures can be helpful.

Lynne Chapman, '85

VISITING THE OCEAN

As we slowly glide up the coastal line, the tantalizing, crisp, salt air reaches our noses. We breathe deeply and sigh. It is so good to be back.

Sunlight glistens off the foamy waves as the water crashes with a deafening sound. We cover our ears, but walk forward, even as we are stunned by the graceful power of the descending waves.

Our feet burn in the sand, but go unnoticed until we reach the damp sand and jump as the frigid water brings us back to reality.

Uninhibited, we dash into the ocean, the full force of the waves surging over our heads, drowning us in wetness. We prance and leap, finally becoming numb enough to the frigid environment beneath us that we can enjoy ourselves immensely.

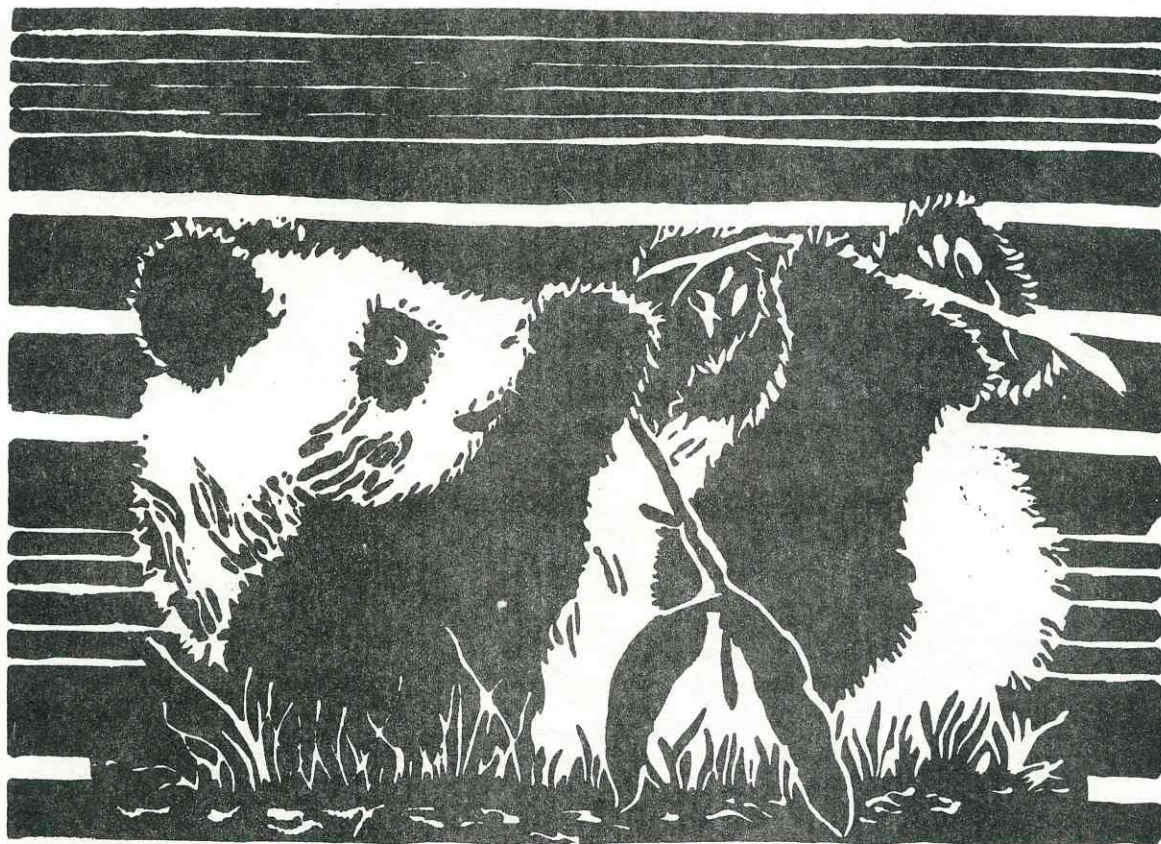
Finally it is time to go. The sunlight has left too quickly just as the time has vanished. The water is bleak and grey, and the air is cold. We pack our bags and depart sadly, but happily think of the next time we would visit the ocean.

Cami Johnson, '85

THE EVERLASTING EXISTENCE

The pain - it's there,
but I won't release it.
I fear it
but I won't run.
I hate it
but I won't let it stop me.
It hurts
but yet I strive on.
The tears - they exist.
They release my pain
that won't be released.
I don't fear the tears
they don't hurt me.
I don't hate the tears
they cleanse me.
I don't cry the tears
for I cannot.

Andrea McBride , '85



Andrea Newkirk, '84

F eeling
R ight
I nside
E verybody
N otices
D emonstrations of
S ingle-mindedness

Lisa Moeller, '85



Mark VanderVinne '84

Progress is a two-edged sword. It advances the world, heals the sick, stirs the economy, and helps the poor. So on the whole it can be said to be good. But progress also destroys. It can destroy a much loved object, a much loved place, or even your dreams and your innocence.

Down the hill from our house was a ditch, not a small ditch like in town, but a big ditch five to ten feet wide and three feet deep: a river to a group of adventurous kids. Trees banked it on either side. Trees that held houses and lookout posts, hiding places and social places, dreams and adventures. Up stream from the trees was a labyrinth of shrubs and brambles, a labyrinth which held tunnels of thorns that led to secret places and treasure, Indians and ambushes, realities and fantasies.

The trees by the ditch, along with the cliffs up the mountain and the pond down the road, were our favorite playground. An empty valley filled with promise and adventure was the playground of the dozen or so kids who lived there. A dozen or so kids that were richer than they could possibly imagine; but their booty was open land and friendship, not gold and possessions.

This was Castle Mountain Ranch, grazing land to housing development. At first only three houses blemished the landscape; ours, the Nash's, and the Kropf's. The Nash kids, Todd, Wendy, and Troy were about our ages; and the eight of us (me, the Nash's and my two older brothers and two older sisters) made a good group. The Kropf's had one girl who was a year older than my oldest sister, Ann. Eventually Ann Kropf and other big kids stole Ann from the group and then there were seven.

Seven little adventurers strolling in the bright Rocky Mountain sun, with a benevolent clear blue sky overhead and coarse, golden hay underfoot. Gradually we consolidated into smaller groups. We also lost my oldest brother, Greg, to the big kids. But although new blood of new neighbors had been mingled with ours and we'd regrouped, we were still the Castle Mountain Kids, one troop of free people who enjoyed the land, each other, and life.

It was the last day of school, a half day of school, and summer stretched ahead like a golden oasis full of promises and hopes, but empty and waiting for our eager hands to fill it with our laughter and our misadventures. The bus dropped us off at the Castle Mountain gate and, instead of a two mile walk home over cow-pattied fields, one of the new kid's mother picked us up and brought us all home. The day was young and we were anxious to rendezvous at the trees and plan the summer, or at least the rest of the afternoon.

I dashed into the house, threw down the remnants of my year in third grade, grabbed a handful of cookies, and rushed out the door, a dynamo in dungarees. The rest of the crowd had just emerged from the weedy field and they good-naturedly stole my cookies. We sauntered across our yard of cultivated dirt, jumped one of the smaller ditches by the house, and assaulted the countryside. As we crested the field that fell away to reveal the trees we recoiled in horror. In our paradise stood bulldozers. Bulldozers!

They built a great house in our field. A great house for a rich man. The rich man left the trees standing but built a sturdy fence around his sanctuary, our sanctuary. He was a generous man and he told us we were free to clamber over the fence and frequent the trees, but they were no longer ours and gradually we stopped going there.

(continued)

Roads and houses began to dot the mountainside and new faces abounded. The fish in the pond were being depleted by unknown fishermen and the cliffs were being explored by new adventurers. Castle Mountain was no longer ours.

We moved and now the cows and the kids no longer people Castle Mountain.

Dave DeBoer, '85

IF ONLY

If only I could see you now:
Just to see you love me once again;
Just to see devotion in your eyes.
If only I could call you friend.

If only I could feel you now:
Just to feel your breath upon my face;
Just to hold me when my dreams have flown.
If only I could feel in place.

I ruined it all,
Ruined a part of my life.
I treated him wrong,
And now all is endless plight.

I do need him now,
Did he know I needed him then?
Oh good Lord, dear Lord,
Could you take my love, my best friend?

If only I could talk to you:
If only to punish me the more;
If only to have me know the pain.
Dear God, what are tears all for?

Susan Meyer, '84

Awakening to the sounds of merry bikers packing up their gear for another eighty-three mile jaunt is one of the true exhilarations of RAGBRAI (Register's Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa). For over ten years, fairly intelligent people from all walks of life have joined together to peddle their Schwinn's across Iowa. This almost effortless and buoyant task annually gains more popularity and participants as any conventional pastime justifiably would. Anyone who can truthfully say they didn't enjoy every minute will still probably be back the next year.

Some critics, of course, have ridiculed the avid biker for being foolish enough to put up with pounding rain, Switzerland-sized hills, sweltering heat, and endless lines for everything from cold showers to food. The two-wheeled diehards endure arctic-cold showers and sleeping on mother nature's little pillows of dirt to get nothing more than a silly patch, not to mention the back breaking position they are in for nearly eight hours each day, humped over those curly reins and seated precariously on those majestic thrones they call seats. But these little discomforts are just a tiny shadow on the enormous amount of fun this whole ordeal has instore.

Nearly every diminutive town along RAGBRAI's path sees this event as a national holiday. They put on a show as if they themselves were traveling with the riders. Polka music loudly broadcasted over the town's intercom system, the Jayceettes barbecue stand, and countless young girl scouts passing out cups of ice-cold lemonade to riders too intent on reaching their destination to join in on the festivities, are just a few of the sights and sounds of this historic event. Folks from three to ninety-three try to position themselves in the best possible place to get a firstclass view to wave and cheer on the travelers as they pass by. For some, this event is of such importance, it will be talked about at dinner tables for generations.

The level headed RAGBRAI participants have many interesting qualities. Everyone shares a sort of comradery to help ease the few lone points of the week-long ride, such as the tenth hour of the one hundred-ten mile day. The singing heard rising from the packs of bikers, the constant "Hi, how ya doing" or "on your left" can be heard throughout the day. Anybody talks to anybody else just to wear off some of the extra energy that wasn't burned off during the course of that eternal day. The RAGBRAI'ers truly show the closeness of a commune that worships bicycles.

The satisfaction of completing a week of this abundant joy is shared by all who could honestly say they didn't "sag" in once. Coming up the final hill into the town designated as "the end" is enough of a lift to make the little twitches of pain leave every muscle in the body. Holding on to the hope that as soon as the finish line is crossed and the front wheel of that triumphant chariot is dipped into the river, done as a tradition, you can quietly slip into a car and soon be home in a real bathtub, not that those one-and-a-half minute washings or because the deepfreeze temperature of the water wasn't refreshing, but for once in the entire week, the body will be totally clean and free of sweat. This type of pleasure cannot be found anywhere else except at the end of RAGBRAI.

(continued)

Surely no better way can be thought of to spend a week in July doing nothing but peddling and eating. The little inconveniences during the short term vacation are a small price to pay for the mounds of festival activities that are enjoyed. This retual is not an act of futility but rather a self-gratifying and pleasurable experience.

Patti Green, '84



Tami Petersen, '84

FOOTLOOSE

I always like to go to the mall,
Just to see the shoes people buy,
And usually come home asking why!
There are high heels,
Worn to eat formal meals.
There are low heels,
Worn to eat any old meals.
Some shoes have wedges,
But most of them are spiked.
Just like the punch we had last night.
A lot of shoes have shoestrings,
But some just own straps.
That is to confuse those who have trouble
Keeping track.
Some shoes are quiet,
That's why people buy them.
I like the shoes that make noise
So I will attract all the boys!
There are shoes for different occasions,
And usually that brings along complication.
Women wear pumps,
That's to keep them from getting down
In the dumps.
Men wear wing tips,
That's to keep them from becoming dips.
But penny loafers are worn by both.
Some shoes are plain,
But lots are colored and plaid.
Those are the shoes that make me glad.
There are shoes for every sport,
So you must remember whether you
Are playing on a field or a court.
Now maybe you can better understand
Why I chose the title "FOOTLOOSE."

Pam Leslie, '87

RADIO

R acing
A long with some friends while music
D rows
I nto
O ur heads

SHOOT OUT

S hoot
H orrible Howard
O ut
O f
T own all the way to
O sages
U gly
T own

SEMI

S uper
E normous
M achine on the
I nterstate

FARMS

F eed
A nimals left and
R ight in the
M ornings and at
S upper

Dan Doyle, '85

The new fallen snow glittered like a sea of sparkling diamonds under the full December moon. The air, crisp and icy, made our lungs ache with every drawn breath. Our hands and feet, wrapped and bundled in fleece and fur, were numb and tingly. Excitement raced wildly through our frozen bodies as we ascended the steep snow covered hill.

When we had reached the top, we gazed out over the white-sprinkled wonderland. In the distance, the warm glow of a blazing fire shone through the frosted window of our tiny cabin. It urged us to leave the cold, to come inside and share its warmth.

"One more run, Daddy! One more!" we begged through chattering teeth.

"Alright, one more," he answered. "Hop on, and hang on to each other so we don't lose one of you in the snow." We hopped on the toboggan and scooted carefully toward the front end. Daddy squatted down behind the sled and planted his toes firmly.

"Ready?" he asked.

"Ready!" I squealed.

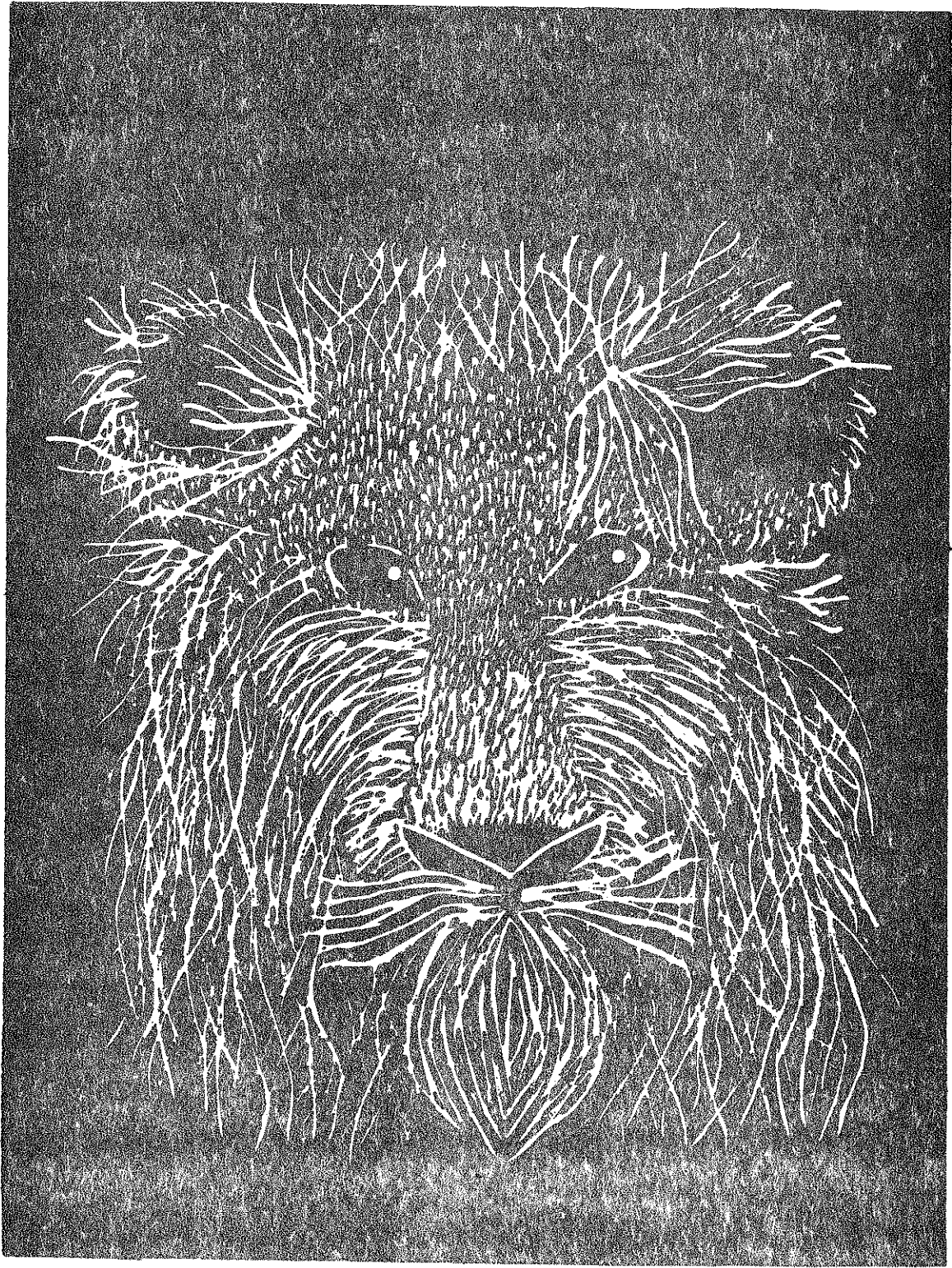
"Then hang on!" he instructed as he gave the toboggan a powerful push that sent us flying down the snow coated hill. We screamed with ecstasy (and just a hint of fear) as we raced down the slopes. We giggled with delight as Daddy flew past us on his toboggan, gaining speed.

He expertly wove the sled back and forth over the dips and bumps, his speed continually increasing. The toboggan glided over the wet snow, its smooth underside leaving a faint trail on the hillside.

A towering mound of drifted snow finally brought Daddy and his sled to a halt. An instant later, my sister and I also found ourselves lodged in the snow bank. The three of us lay in the wintry blanket shaking with laughter.

When the roar finally died to a giggle, we picked up our sleds and hung them on the side of the house. Then we hurried inside to the warmth of the fire, leaving the arctic cold outside.

Michelle Masterson, '84



Carey Swanson, '84

WHIFFLE BIRD'S REVERIE

It had been hard to let the humans go back, but somehow they managed. The King had missed them the most, but with Clarity, his new wife, he had managed. Of all the King's subjects, Whiffle Bird was the one who took the longest to get back into the swing of things. Even now, she longed to fly and perch on Tom's shoulder.

Often she would fall into a reverie of what it would be like for the children and the Professor to return. It was from one of these reveries that she was awoken by an insistent prodding in her back.

"Dear Whiffle Bird," the Prock was saying, "his highness, the Whangdoodle, is ill. You and I must enter the human world and return here with the Professor and the children. Only the Professor can help this time!"

Whiffle Bird struggled to collect her thoughts. As she thought, her tiny elf-like hands involuntarily parted her brilliant rainbow-colored plumage. Two tiny bead-like eyes gazed at the Prock and rapidly became misty. She uttered but one word, "mayday".

The trip to the humans' world was short and uneventful. The Professor and children were easy to find. When told of the Whangdoodle's plight, each became upset.

Ben, the oldest, was now fifteen and was becoming more and more logical in his thinking. Fantastical beings hadn't much of a place in his mind. However, he promised to help as much as he could.

Tom, now 12, reacted with mild anger. Whiffle Bird immediately flew to his shoulder to sooth him with cooing sounds.

Lindy, who was "ten and a half," as she often proudly stated, started to cry. Silently, the tears slid down her cheeks. She looked at the Professor and said, "May we go please?"

Professor Savant looked uncomfortable and said, "I have so much to do here," but as this statement brought on a barrage of complaints, he said, "But, we will go and do what we can."

As soon as they arrived back in Whangdoodle land the Prock said sullenly, "We should take the Jolly Boat. It is the quickest way to the palace."

On the Jolly Boat, everyone was quiet and withdrawn. The laughter at the jokes to get the boat started was forced. The Prock sat with a frowning, worried expression on his face.

The Prock's skin had a bluish tint to it, but now the blue had faded, and the Prock looked even slimmer and lankier than ever. His normally loose sweater now looked like a sleeping bag on him.

Lindy wandered downstairs to the main salon. Even the large soda fountain did not cheer her up. She looked all around the room and saw the sign above the doors. PAX AMOR ET LEPOS IN IOCANDO. It meant, "Peace, love and a sense of fun."

"The Whangdoodle is fun," she thought. This instantly brought her thoughts back to their last visit. She had spent a lot of time with him. He had found her, "An endearing, charming and fascinating little girl." She found him equally as charming, endearing and fascinating. He had a sweet tooth, you know, it was the one with the daisy on it. Her thoughts were brought back to the present by Ben's words.

Whiffle Bird's Reverie (continued)

"We are in Ploy, the palace is just a few minutes away. Come up and talk to Prock. I think he could really use your support. This is a hard time for him."

Just before they entered the Whangdoodle's room, Prock said, "Now don't be surprised, his color is gone." That was an understatement. He was pure white as compared to his usual fawn brown. As a Whangdoodle he could change colors to suit his moods. If he was really ecstatic he could turn flange (every color of the rainbow). Flange was particularly beautiful. He had turned flange when he was dancing with Clarity at her coronation ball.

It was very hard to see him so colorless. Lindy ran over to his bed and hugged him, and told him of her last two years in two minutes.

The Professor went over and sat next to the King and looked him over. He said, "Has anything unusual happened?"

The King replied, "I think they're losing faith. They don't believe in me anymore."

Lindy spoke up immediately, "I still believe! None of us have lost faith!"

Savant said, "Lindy is right on that point. It has to be something else."

"Have you still been eating all that Wodge?" the Professor inquired.

"Yes, the usual. You know I can't give up my favorite confection."

"Well, that explains everything. I'm going to insist that you cut down on your Wodge consumption. Prock, you make sure he sticks to it. Just to be safe, Clarity is to do the same."

Going back home, the countryside seemed much brighter and much more awake.

The Whiffle Bird awoke to the Flutterbyes singing and realized that this was all just one of her reveries.

Beth Brown, '85

DISSOLUTENESS

With a smirk they leave me,
Escaping my setting sun,
Leaving me to the hands of the night.
Alone in the dark I sit, and listen.
Nero fiddles - I must dance...

My cheeks drink of salty brine,
Their thirst is great.
My heart beats a steady solo,
Echoing through my empty body.
My sun shines elsewhere...

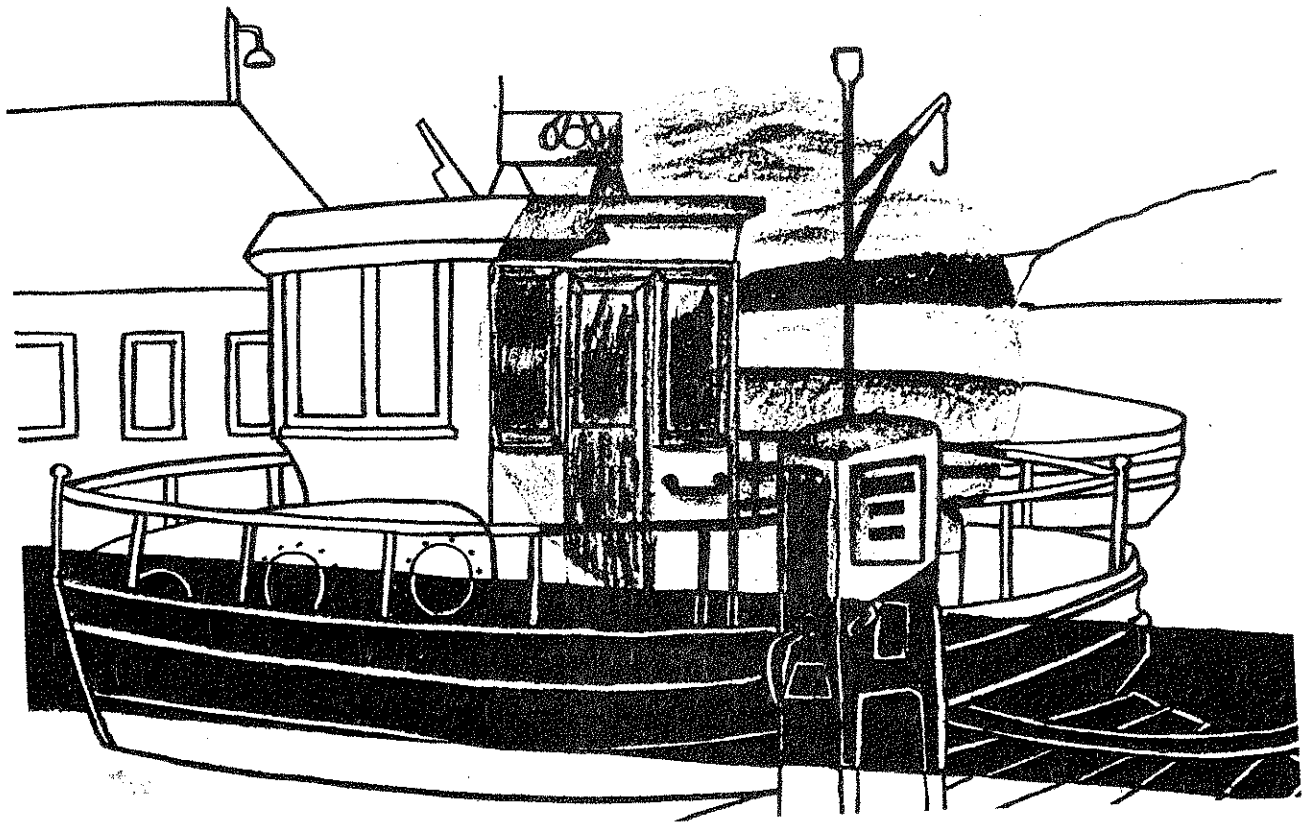
The razor.
Sharp and cold.
I let it drink of my life.
Slowly I fade.
They hide me in the dark, suffocating earth,
Where I join the rotting corpses.
And Nero plays on...

Kyle Hall, '87

PEER PRESSURE AT A PARTY

A friend walked over and handed me a beer
The question ran through my mind, "Why am I here?"
I took it without thinking
I can't even stand drinking
These aren't the people that are at school
They're all different, like they've got to be cool
I wanted to get up and go
People would think I was weird so I decided no
Everyone went to smoke outside
I said I was allergic to smoke, I lied
They sat puffing away at their cigarettes
Then they started making really stupid bets
Now it came time to prove themselves right
Two guys started their trucks and turned on the lights
They took off not knowing it'd be the last time
we saw Rich
He was wasted, was driving too fast, and met the ditch.

Melanie Mathias, '87



Kim Schneckloth, '85

As I lay in the comfortable embrace of the new, suede couch, I looked up at the doctor in his gleaming perfection. He wore trousers immaculately pressed, a tasteful maroon tie, and a white sports jacket that would have made Admiral Nimitz pea-green with envy. His saintly, benign countenance beamed, radiating confidence.

"Let's play a word association game?" he said with a smile that would have had Elizabeth Cady Stanton on her knees.

Always affable, I agreed with a similar, if less dazzling, smile. For this doctor was not an M.D. but a highly respected, and priced, psychiatrist.

"Up," he said.

"Down," I countered.

"Black," he ventured.

"White," I shot back.

"Forwards."

"Backwards."

"Viet Nam."

"Model ships."

"A strange association."

"I know..."

For it was a strange association. I was born during the escalation of that "war." Two weeks before my birth, October 13, 1966, to be precise, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara went to Viet Nam to see what it was like, as if he could during a short stay behind the lines. He was optimistic about how the fighting was going and saw no reason to increase the pace of the "war." But a couple of days before I was born he came home and more troops were sent to the Viet Cong and Agent Orange infested jungles and villages.

And this I associated with model ships. Why?

My father had a model ship. A big wooden ship with cloth sails and a working wheel and rudder that sat on a pedestal on the big buffet in our dining room. It was a favorite, if forbidden toy, and I spent many furtive hours being a swash-buckling captain on stormy, violent seas. And on the sides were the words "Viet Nam." Curious words, I thought when I could read them, but it was not till around '74 when I asked what they meant.

"It was a war," I was told. "Oh boy," I thought. War was neat. My friends and I played war. "Bang, bang, you're dead! Count to ten." Of course I knew there was more to war. I knew people died and were hurt; but I had no experience with death, and hurt was skinning a knee. So Viet Nam was a game and words on the side of a wooden ship.

But now I know about Viet Nam and the events leading up to it, and the parallels of today are obvious. I hope that we can learn from the past and not be condemned to repeat it.

But, with today's rulers and insanities, in my mind's eye I see a wooden ship sailing to an unwanted war.

Dave DeBoer, '85

KUTCHERISM

The laws of Kutcherism are for a person who is very busy and wants to make life better for himself or herself. The laws are easy to remember.

The first law is to make time for everything. Even though a person thinks he or she does not have time to do an assignment, activity, or even an aerobic dance class, he or she really does have the time to do that assignment or activity or go to that aerobic dance class.

The second law is that a person can be anything he or she wants. If a young woman wants to be a construction worker or a young man wants to be a home economics teacher, the person can get the proper training.

The third law is for a person to do everything to the best of his or her ability. If a young woman has a problem with a drafting assignment or a young man has a problem with a Spanish assignment, he or she should try to work out the problem, even it means getting help. Success is the final result.

The fourth law is to obey the rules set up. If a person breaks a rule, he or she will destroy his or her ego, not to forget his or her self-esteem will be lowered.

The fifth and final law of Kutcherism is to accept the Lord as a Savior. If a person does accept Him, things in life will improve. The process, popular to contrary belief, does not take place overnight.

These laws are basically the philosophy of me. I hope the reader remembers these laws.

Melissa Kutcher, '85

REALITY

Like the unseen cobwebs
Of some forgotten shelf,
Far from any civilization
A young man thinks to himself...

"What has happened to me?
Why am I this way?"
And in his desperation,
He slowly slips away.

While widows cry on the 13th St.,
And all music ceases to play,
Another life is wasted,
But it's just another day.

Susan Meyer, '84

When I was an adventure-seeking child, camping out at grandmother's house in Wisconsin represented the same courage a mountain climber needs to scale Mt. Everest. Two summers ago I decided to climb the mountainous hill behind my grandparent's house, pitch a tent up on the summit, and sleep there all night. Not wanting to be alone, I invited my aunt and sister to join me, but they declined my offer. The family, especially my grandparents, thought that I was half-baked; but when evening came, I packed my things, rode the bike down first a highway and then a dirt road, and climbed up the steep hill.

Darkness transformed the campsite into a radically different and frightening place. Every noise sounded like wild animals surrounding the tent, or big foot monsters planning an attack, or maybe escape criminals coming to kill me. The portable radio was little comfort compared to the sheer terror experienced.

Finally I came to the conclusion that I could either stay up all night like a frightened rabbit, or run down the hill, jump on the bike, and ride home to safety. I decided to go home.

Clouds covered the moon, but lightning lit the sky and thunder crashed as I pulled on a jacket and tennis shoes. As I crawled quickly out of the safety of the nylon ostrich shelter, I noticed that my destination was just a tiny house in the distance. A glance behind showed the majestic forest swaying wildly in the wind.

Running like a madman, I dashed to the bike and pedaled faster than imaginable. The fields on each side seemed to contain menacing creatures just waiting to grab me. After what seemed like hours, I was at the house. I ran to the front door, only to find it locked. I slipped into the garage and found the back door open. Relieved, I went to the basement and fell asleep on the floor while rain poured down outside.

Kathleen Pittman, '84

PROVERBS OF WEIRD WISDOM

Purple and pink plaid people are probably a great impossibility.

People who contemplate the probable impossibility of the existence of purple and pink plaid people during class are most probably not paying attention.

Alas, we can never be what we once hoped to be, nor can we ever return to that time in which we hoped to be what we cannot be, nor can we ever be as we should be, but we should strive to be, for we can never hope to stay as we are.

Lisa Moeller, '85



A NEW BEGINNING

The old man lay on his death bed. His body was so drained of any energy it was capable of only one thing, lying and waiting for the inevitable....death. He was not frightened of his destiny, more relaxed and at peace. For his work was all but over; never again was he to be bothered with such trivial things as politics, money, or the basic philosophy of life itself. Nor would he be burdened with the decisions that would form his world and the world of those to follow. Yes, his work was nearly through, but so was his life. As the final hours crept past, he listened and felt his heart beat, pumping the very fuel of life throughout his body. Ever so slightly it began to slow until at twelve midnight it ceased, never to beat again.

At that same moment a young woman's laborious efforts gave way to the birth of a baby boy. He lay in a tiny crib in the hospital crying. Not for pain, despair, or joy, for these things he had yet to learn. He was crying because a force within him told him to. It knew he needed oxygen to begin the heart pumping the juices of life through his tiny body. He was not ready to make even the simplest of decisions yet. He had everything to learn. His brain thrived on every opportunity to absorb bits of information. This child would someday change the world. Maybe in the smallest way, he may not recognize it himself, but he would make a difference. After all, even the smallest piece is important to the whole.

Kyle Hall, '87



Angie Evans, '85

THE SHORTCUT

It's that time of year again. That time of year when the chilled winds of winter creep over the horizon, sweeping through the fallen leaves; dead, like the season. Colors fade. Trees lose their splendor beauty while grass becomes dry, giving up its warm, green richness. One month will bring the grace of snowfall.....when nature covers its dead.

I remember it as though it happened only yesterday.....

My story begins on a stilled night in late November of 1962. I was eight years old at the time. Our family lived in Clyman, Wisconsin, a diminutive, one-story town with a reasonable population.

As I recall, my brother and I were at my grandmother's house. My grandmother lived alone on the other side of town. It was around 9:30 p.m. as we stepped out into the crisp night air for a long walk home.

The sun had been down four hours now, leaving the western sky a hideous black curtain, silent as the misted fog that surrounded our path.

I remember how the cool air felt as it passed through my lungs. The air was silent. Not the slightest gust of wind, or trace of a breeze was known. The night itself was silent.....dead silent. Our footsteps from the hard-paved street cut through the night air. Neither my brother John nor I spoke. Upon reaching Marshall Street, he stopped walking.

"What's the matter?" When I looked back at him, he was staring straight ahead at the obscured street light, which stood at the corner of Marshall and Hickory Street. This light was about 200 yards ahead of us in the fog. He then glanced to his right, across the ditch and into the tangled mass of trees and bushes that slopped downward. Our mother had equipped John with a flashlight for our foggy trip home. John shined the light through the nearby trees. Then, with a small grin on his face, he nodded in determination.....

I knew what he was thinking. I could tell I was going to hate his idea, even though no words had yet escaped his lips. Unfortunately, I could read my brother's mind too well.

"Let's take the shortcut," he spoke. His voice still echoes through my mind.

"No way! C'mon John, let's just go the usual way."

"The usual way home is a twenty minute walk from here. If we cut down through the ravine and Whispering Pines, we'd be home in ten minutes." His reasoning was logical, but I still didn't like it.

"John, mom doesn't want us walking that way! What if I fell into Grover's Creek?" My voice sliced the frozen atmosphere.

"Grover's Creek is dry this time of year, you know that. Besides, mom will never find out we took a shortcut." He looked at me then turned toward the ravine. "I don't feel like walking for twenty minutes. You can."

I knew the way home, but I didn't want to walk alone in the fog. Besides, John had the flashlight.

"John, wait up! I'm coming." I had no other choice.....than to follow.

The ravine had existed much longer than the town. My grandmother once told me the town was actually built around it. The ravine drops down about forty feet. I had only been in it once before, and that was in daylight. There is a stretch of flat land at the bottom. Grover's Creek, an intermittent stream, borders the northern part of this flatland. A few yards beyond that is the reason I didn't like John's brilliant idea.....Whispering Pines.

THE SHORTCUT (continued)

Whispering Pines is a ninety-four year old cemetery. The very first grave dates back to 1889. There is one single road that leads to Whispering Pines, an unpaved road from the east, off of Hickory Street. The road is fenced off now, but I remember when I was five years old our family drove to Whispering Pines. It was the year of my grandfather's death. He was the last one to be buried in the ravine.

The darkness seemed to uplift as we reached the bottom. A gray wisp hung close to the ground. We crunched our way through waist-high, dust-coated, weeds. John skipped ahead of me for a moment, then leaped over the indentation of Grover's Creek. I ran to keep up, because the flashlight didn't exactly cut clean through the ninety-four year old darkness. It only pushed it back a little.

Trees started to thin out. Ahead of us was a shriveled, rusted, iron fence. Beyond that was the graveyard. Only three trees stood amongst the worn headstones. The limbs of these trees held no leaves. They twisted through the air in horrifying positions, looking as though they needed to grasp something. Cracks appeared on most of the headstones. Some were only wooden crosses protruding from the earth.

The Earth...

The ground seemed slightly warmer, and more soft to touch once we climbed over the fence.

The Fog...

I remember how close the mist hung to the ground. A crazy thought went through my mind: what if it wasn't fog rising from the soil, but the breath of the dead buried beneath us? This sent chills to my heart, making me walk faster.

The Silence...

We couldn't even hear our own footsteps as we walked. Everything stood still. The air seemed oddly warmer. I was scared. In my entire life, I had never been so frightened. I clutched the back of my brother's jacket. The edge of the cemetery was near. I could see the iron fence about fifty yards ahead of us. We ran.

At first, I didn't really notice when my brother stumbled. I thought nothing of it, and kept running. I didn't stop until I heard his cry.

"KURT!" his voice sounded different. It sounded scared, yet puzzled.

"HELP ME!.....KURRRRRRT!"

John was on his hands and knees when I got to him. The fog was half-way up his arms and legs.

At that moment, the fog cleared. It sucked its way into the warm ground. The dead were inhaling now!

The ground beneath me sunk as my feet slid through the mud. John was screaming. My next sight sent my heart pounding vigorously.....He was being held down by arms rising from the soft earth. Each arm writhed in terrifying gestures. I could smell the rotted flesh of the dead.

"KURT! GET ME LOOOOSE.....," he spoke quickly.

At that time, an arm shot up from the wet ground. The hand clenched John's hair, and pulled his head down to the surface. He was screaming.

I tried to pull him free, but there was no use. The dead are stronger than the living. Something grabbed my ankle and I fell backward. After kicking myself free, I ran.

THE SHORTCUT (continued)

While ascending the ravine, I noticed how the warmth of the bottom faded. The top was cold and quiet. Soon, I found myself on the porch of the nearest house, my clothes muddy and torn, my body shaking, and my heart pounding.

My brother's body was never found. Rumor says he had been kidnapped. The search was over; it ended nearly twenty years ago.

I know the truth. I know the actual reason of my brother's horrifying fate. I alone know.

My nightmares stopped almost five years ago. I have a wife and family now. We seem to be happy. Still, when the fog hangs low on dark autumn nights.....I stay indoors.

Kevin Kluever, '84

A POEM IN INVISIBLE INK

Tom Pittman '85

DAWN

My last precious moments of sleep ended as my alarm went off at its designated time. My hand stretched slowly out of my man-made cocoon and I snapped off the radio. I lay still for a little while, allowing consciousness to seep into my brain.

It was still dark outside, yet I eagerly climbed out of my warm bed. I threw off my nightgown, pulled on my clothes and hurriedly ran a comb through my unruly mop of hair.

It was my favorite time of day. I tiptoed down the stairs, pulled a coat randomly from the closet, and shrugged into it. As I quietly opened the front door, I felt the cool, crisp air rush into my stale lungs. I felt refreshed and cleansed.

Once outside, I sat down in my dew-covered chair and waited for what I knew would inevitably happen - what had happened every day since the beginning of time itself. Then it began.

To the east, a dark pink stain of light began to spread over the sky. It was as if a can of pink paint had been spilled on the edge of a blue shag carpet and was diffusing slowly outward.

Birds began to chirp, expressing gratitude that the sun would once more rise. They soon were singing merrily, ready to begin their daily activities.

I felt a familiar rush of warmth and emotion when I finally saw the top orange sliver of the sun peek at me over the horizon. I sat relaxed in meditation as the sun rose up majestically and became so bright that I could no longer gaze at it.

The sky eventually faded to a baby blue and the sun turned bright yellow. The sun's powerful rays were beginning to eat through the early morning mist as I got up and stretched my stiff joints.

I took one last prolonged look at the beautifully inspiring scene of nature, then I turned and went reluctantly back into the house.

Dawn had come and gone, and I was there to see it. The feeling I received from this sight enabled me to survive until the next day, when I'd be reborn once again.



Mary Kuehl, '85

Angie Evans, '85

When I was a little girl, about the age of four or five, my favorite thing of all things was to plant myself on my daddy's lap, grab each of his massive arms, and stretch them around me. Next, I wiggled and wriggled into that just right, familiar position and warmed in his cozy, comfortable grasp. There I would sit, twirling the gold and silver band on his ring finger. This whole routine was the one thing that pacified me for minutes on end because no one, absolutely no one, had that same toasty warmth of my father, or that odd ring that entranced me.

The winter time was the best time to cuddle with my Daddy - especially at Christmas when the weather was the coldest. But when I wasn't on Daddy's lap during that month, which was rare, I spent my time wishing, just like every other kid, of sitting on Santa Claus' lap and uttering to him what I wanted Christmas morning. So, on the day I was told by my daddy that Santa was coming to town, MY town, I was elated. I drove everyone in the family Christmas crazy with my constant droning of "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" and "All I Want for Christmas", and practiced every minute, even while sitting on Dad's lap, what I was going to tell Santa. I had a lot to ask for!

That day finally came. I wanted to go with both Mom and Dad, but Dad explained to me he had to work on the farm, so Mom was the lucky one to put up with my constant, excited chatter. When we got to the fire station, where Santa's reindeer had left him, Mommy clutched my hand and stood with me in line during the hours I had to wait. As the time dragged by, I grew fidgety and bored and wished, not of Santa, but of climbing onto my Daddy's lap and snuggling into his thick arms.

Suddenly, I was next in line to be with Santa and I forgot all about my Daddy; Santa was quickly more important in my thoughts. He looked just like I imagined he would - puffy like the Pillsbury Dough Boy and dressed in red, white, and shiny black gloves and boots. Finally, I felt Mommy tugging on my arm and I trampled toward Santa. I put one foot on his shiny boot and launched myself onto his lap. Then I felt two strong arms encircle me, just like my Daddy did, and I knew why Santa did that. As the words to my song "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" say, Santa watched me all the time and knew I liked it when Dad pulled his arms around me. Santa is so smart, I remember thinking.

"What do you want for Christmas, Jane?"

How did Santa know my name?! Then I remembered what my song said.

As I talked on and on of what I desperately needed, I held his gloved hand and felt a bump on a finger on his left hand. Santa's hurt, I thought. I pulled his glove off, and there it was - my Daddy's ring!

I pivoted on his lap towards Mommy and she stared at me, searching my face for signs of what I had discovered. But I was too young to realize. I thought that Santa knew I was wishing for my Daddy more than anything, so he borrowed my Daddy's lap and ring for the day while Dad was working.

(continued)

For the next couple of days after that incident, I was slightly confused. But as all little kids do, I shrugged off the problem. Yet, Mom actually told me her version of what happened a few years later: Santa called Daddy at home to say he could not come because Rudolph's nose was not glowing because he was sick. So Santa sent Dasher to my house with his suit for Daddy to borrow that day!

Jane Matthews, '84



Kim Schneckloth, '85

A COUNTRY MORNING

A country morning is a special time for a farmer. Usually beginning before the crack of dawn, it gives him a chance to wake up, revive himself, and review the day's extensive schedule as he casually sips on a steaming, strong, black, freshly-brewed cup of coffee. The morning is a quiet, peaceful time that the farmer really enjoys.

Outside, the farm animals can also sense a new day approaching. This is signified by an occasional moo from a cow, an ear-piercing honk and flapping of wings as the geese stretch after a long night, a mellow grunt from a piglet as he departs from the warm barn into the biting cold air, and the ever-symbolic morning signal - a crow from the exclusively colored rooster as the magnificent midwest sun rises in the eastern sky and sheds its brilliant rays on the land.

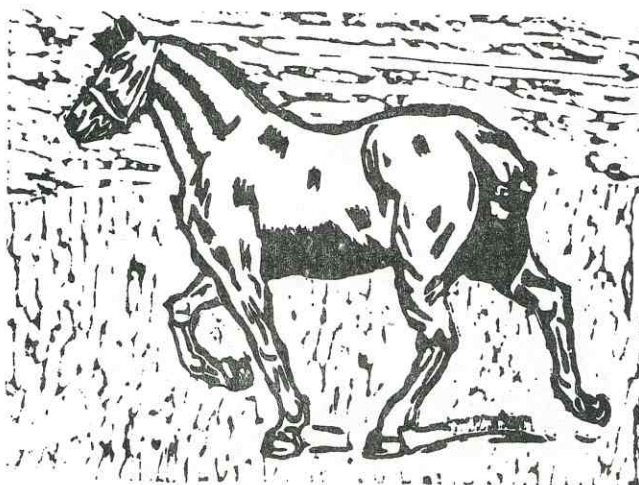
The smells of the morning are particularly strong and flavorful. This may include the fresh, sweet, wet droplets that covered everything during the night. There is an especially strong aroma coming from the pasture as it awaits its time to be baled later in the day.

In the barn there is a special, innocent, wonderful newness that was brought into the world over the night. Bessy has successfully delivered her third calf and caringly licked it while displaying it to the farmer who had just walked in the barn, who in turn gave an approving, satisfied grin.

After the animals are checked, fed and watered, and the eggs brought in, the hard-working farmer can sit down to a wholesome breakfast. An exhilarating aroma can be smelled from the kitchen as the eggs and bacon hiss, crackle, pop, and spatter from the hot skillet.

Yes, a country morning is a very precious, peaceful time of the day that only the farm family can appreciate.

Jeff LaFrenz, '86



Patty Cahill, '84

It was a beautiful early fall morning, just before dawn. I could just barely see a pink tinge near the edges of the world and the stars were still brilliant on their black velvet cloth. Everything still slumbered on, oblivious to the dawning of this beautiful morning. The silence wasn't threatening, but was peaceful and had a calming effect on me. The air was cold and crisp, but rather than chilling me, it refreshed me.

I took several deep breaths, luxuriating in the feeling of the cold air rushing into my lungs. For a long time I just stood in one place seeing all, yet I incorporated it into my own fanciful world.

I noticed Venus on the horizon and began to envision life on other planets and universes. There was no doubt in my mind that there is life elsewhere in the cosmos. My mind wandered into the possibilities of the appearance of an extraterrestrial being. My mind continued to ramble on, and I found myself pondering my origin. Which was it, creation or evolution?

It was then that the sun poked its huge, shining head past the horizon. One more thought flew through my head. There must be a Supreme Being. Sunrises and morning like this just don't happen by themselves.

Beth Brown, '85



J'Lynn Gilbert, '87



Andrea Newkirk, '84



Angie Evans, '85